

Students will spend the majority of their time interacting with the resources featured within “Content and Assessment” area. It is therefore important that faculty choose a layout that contains meaningful labels and is easy to navigate. This will not only minimize the amount of questions that faculty will receive during the semester but will also provide students with a positive user experience in Blackboard.

This guide will showcase some quick examples of different layouts based on the various course modalities: technology enhanced (i.e., no reduction in seat time), hybrid (i.e., F2F and online), and fully online.

#### Course Delivery - Technology Enhanced

Although these courses might require less online content, students still need to have a clear understanding of the design layout. A technology enhanced course might include menu items based on the types of activities, resources and/or evaluations.

In this example, students have the ability to download the lesson content for their onsite class by simply going to the PowerPoint Handouts section. The other two menu items are meant to highlight specific groupings of content such as tests and lab materials.

##### Content and Assessments

PowerPoint Handouts

Unit Tests

Lab Resources

#### Course Delivery – Hybrid

A hybrid course requires a more detailed structure as students will be required to alternate between onsite and online learning activities. An important part of hybrid learning is to highlight the importance of the online component by effectively branding this collection of content and learning activities.

In this example, the faculty member has chosen to use the following labels:

- **Chapter Overview** – contains all the handouts for the onsite class.
- **Learning Units** – represents the online content of the hybrid course. Students would have been instructed to complete the “Learning Units” before or after they attend the onsite class. These units would be properly labeled and crafted using specific BB tools.
- **Essays** – a specific location to host all the materials associated with one type of assignment.
- **Case Studies** – a menu item that contains content for multiple lessons. This creates a larger access point for students without needing to return to a specific lesson.
- **Additional Resources** – these sections are ideal for including any other materials that might be useful for students (e.g., journal articles, twitter feeds, websites, student wiki, etc...).

##### Content and Assessments

Chapter Overview

Learning Units

Essays

Case Studies

Additional Resources

Faculty may also wish to combine the onsite and online materials into weekly modules (see online example).

## Course Delivery - Online

An online course requires students to use a variety of tools in order to participate in learning activities. A carefully crafted course menu will help faculty reinforce the importance of student interaction by providing students with direct links to specific tools.

In this example, the faculty member has chosen the following labels:

- **Weekly Modules** – contains all the course content and links to various learning activities for each weekly lesson.
- **Personal Journal / Group Project / Discussion Board** – all of these items are direct links to the various tools used in the course. This provides students with quick access to their journal, group members, and discussion forums.
- **Tests & Final Exam** – another simple grouping of one assessment type that can also host other documents.

### Content and Assessments

Weekly Modules

Personal Journal

Group Project

Discussion Board

Tests & Final Exam

## Course Delivery – Thematic Approach (all modalities)

Another potential strategy in organizing your content is to use larger units to categorize the information over an entire course. This strategy requires careful planning as faculty should outline the length of time for each unit within the delivery schedule.

It also requires careful planning in lesson content as students should be given clear direction on deadlines and the scope of work involved in each unit.

In this example, the faculty member chose to include a Getting Started section which provides students with a good opportunity to orient themselves to the content layout before starting Unit 1. The units also have specific content-related titles that help identify the specific topics.

### Content and Assessments

Getting Started

Unit 1: Socialization

Unit 2: Deviance

Unit 3: Rehabilitation

Final Project

## Design Tips for Content and Assessments

1. Use simple language when labeling menu items
2. Be consistent in your naming conventions (e.g., do not confuse “discussion board” with “discussion forums”)
3. Avoid the need to jump in and out of multiple areas in a given week
4. Consider using an orientation video or adding a simple legend to the Course Information section so that students understand each menu item
5. Try to limit your content-related items to 5 or 6 as this will make it easier to read the course menu
6. Use the “student preview” tool often so that you may experience the course and its content as a student. Some content within the various menu items will look vastly different as a student user.
7. Ask students about the layout and collect feedback – this might help you identify problem areas for semester startup

For more information on Blackboard, click on the link to open [Blackboard Standards: A Guide for Faculty Members](#)

**For Blackboard Assistance, Please Contact your eLearning Specialists**

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